

THE POWER OF BRINGING BETTER TOMORROW

SIL
Bangladesh
helps
communities
achieve
their
development
goals
while
retaining
their
Ethno
linguistic
identities.

It is exciting to realize the power of women working together. I once heard that the progress of women leads to the progress of the world. I want to share the story of some remarkable Kurux women who have shown what can be achieved when different groups work in partnership to achieve their dreams. In a Bangladeshi context, women have a lot of responsibilities, both within and outside the family. Married women often carry additional stress with their responsibilities as wives and mothers. I have seen that this is also true of women from ethno-linguistic communities.

Over 70 women from the Kurux community have formed a group and given themselves the interesting name, “Zero to Hero”, with the aim of bringing about changes in their family’s lives and their society. This self-help women’s group started in 2014 and is now a model for other women in neighboring villages. The group runs a savings program in which each member or family saves a little rice twice a day from their meals. They then sell this and save the income. The group is therefore financially well equipped, not only to meet their own needs, but also to provide support to other development activities in the community. Although the leaders of the group have not had many educational opportunities, they understand the benefits of being united and partnering with others.

Recently ‘Zero to Hero’ formed a successful partnership with a group of young people (‘Generation Next Group’ or GNG) from Molong, a Kurux village. The GNG is part of the Kurux Ethnodev Project. When I visited the village, I was amazed by the simple strategy they had developed together to raise their living standards.



...SPECIAL COMMENTS

These activities are making a small but significant contribution to health and education in the village, which are two major components of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. The activities have also quietly brought about a change in attitudes towards women in the village and wider Kurux society. . .

... SNAPSHOTS ...
WHAT'S PLANNED FOR THIS
MONTH

For more information on **topics mentioned in this newsletter**, please go to .

http: <http://www.silbangladesh.org/>

SIL BANGLADESH
LANGUAGE, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SIL

SIL Bangladesh
Avenue 2, Road 15, House 974, Mirpur DOHS, Dhaka 1216.

To subscribe to this publication ...

E-mail: silupdate_bangladesh@sil.org

Feel free to forward this newsletter to others so that they can consider subscribing.

November, 2018 : Nutrition Program with lesson delivery and Learning Corner among 5 communities.

November 9, 2018 : Orthography Workshop with Kurux community.

November 12-15, 2018 : Active Citizen Youth Leadership Training .

November, 2018: Employee's Annual Performance Review (APR).

THE POWER OF BRINGING BETTER TOMORROW . . . CONT'D

The Molong GNG group was formed in June 2018. Polash Toppo is the leader of this group of 21 young people who are future leaders. They meet together regularly to discuss topics such as leadership, unity, advocacy, the importance of education and gender equality. Inspired by the topic of advocacy with local government, the GNG identified the need for sanitary latrines in their area. They drew the attention of local government to this problem and found that sanitary latrine equipment had already been distributed in their villages. But a lack of awareness meant that the people who received the equipment had not set them up. They made a list of the houses that didn't have any latrine facilities and then arranged a meeting with the "Zero to Hero" women's group to share their ideas and needs. The women's group recognized the need and approved a loan from their group funds without charging interest. This was an act of generosity as they could have tried to profit personally from the loan. The two groups started working together and arranged 30 sanitary latrines for 30 families in the villages. Seven were already completed by the time we visited. The GNG and the women's group are active agents of change in their village.

The groups have also taken the initiative to start free tuition classes for school children from the village. They got approval from village leaders to use a tin shed as a classroom. Three GNG members have been appointed to help the students and their remuneration is paid by the "Zero to Hero" women's group. Nearly 50 students are currently benefiting from the tuition classes.

These activities are making a small but significant contribution to health and education in the village, which are two major components of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The activities have also quietly brought about a change in attitudes towards women in the village and wider Kurux society. There is increasing acknowledgement of the role of women in the community. Men have started to show them more respect and as a result these women are free to join collectives and serve their society.

Written by: Zenith Mousumy Sarker

